

Ebensburg Coal Company,  
Processing Plant and Powerhouse  
Colver Mine  
Reese Street between Third and Fourth streets  
Colver  
Cambria County  
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-237

HAER  
PA,  
II. COLV,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

EBENSBURG COAL COMPANY,  
PROCESSING PLANT AND POWERHOUSE

HAER  
PA  
11-COLV,  
1-

HAER No. PA-237

Location: Reese Street between Third and Fourth streets, Colver, Cambria County, Pennsylvania

USGS Quad: Colver, Pennsylvania (1:24000)  
UTM: 17 E.685880 N.4490700

Date of Construction: 1911-21

Builder: Ebensburg Coal Company, a subsidiary of Coleman & Weaver Company

Present Owner: Unknown

Present Use: Abandoned

Significance: Containing a tipple, cleaning plant and powerhouse, this structure served one of the largest and most productive mines in Cambria County.

Project Information: In February 1987, the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) and the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) began a multi-year historical and architectural documentation project in southwestern Pennsylvania. Carried out in conjunction with America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), HAER undertook a comprehensive inventory of Blair and Cambria counties as the first step in identifying the region's surviving historic engineering works and industrial resources.

The results of this project have been published in Blair County and Cambria County, Pennsylvania: An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites (1990), edited by Gray Fitzsimons and produced by HABS/HAER for the National Park Service.

Compiler: Nancy Shedd and Ken Heineman, Historians  
Gray Fitzsimons and Kenneth Rose, Editors

#### History:

By the time the Colver mine had begun operations in 1910, the Ebensburg Coal Company was in the midst of building workers' housing and developing the planned community of Colver. Originally called Colver Heights, the town's streets were laid out in a standard grid plan. In addition to erecting company offices, a store, and housing, Ebensburg Coal built several commercial buildings including a laundry and theater. Most of these structures were completed between 1911 and 1921. A number of the historic coal-company buildings survive including the Ebensburg Coal office building, most of the company houses, the hotel, the theater, the jail, and the company store.

In 1910 the Coleman & Weaver Company opened the Colver mine into the Lower Kittanning seam. The name of the mine was derived from the first and last three letters of the owners' names. It was operated as the Ebensburg Coal Company and laid out by C. E. Sharpless as a drift mine. The first load of coal was shipped via the captive Cambria & Indiana Railroad in October 1911, and by 1914 the Colver mine was producing an average of 3,400 tons of coal per day. A large colliery located west of the Colver, near the repair shops of the C&I, contained the processing plant, tipple, pumphouse, and powerhouse. In 1931 the company replaced the old processing plant and tipple with a larger five-story, tipple and cleaning plant. As was common practice at the time, bituminous coal was pneumatically dry-cleaned and sorted in the separator facility prior to shipping. Dust collectors were used to remove the tremendous amounts of coal dust generated by this process. The dust collectors at the Colver tipple and separator were installed on top of the facility.

#### Sources:

Jencks, S.H. "A History of the Cambria and Indiana Railroad," unpublished diary of S.H. Jencks, former Chief Engineer, Cambria & Indiana Railroad, Colver, Pennsylvania., 1885-1931.  
Hajzus, John. Retired miner, Eastern Coal Association, Colver, Pennsylvania. Interview, 20 August 1987.  
Sanborn Map Company. Colver, Pennsylvania. New York: The Sanborn Map Company, 1924.